

2011 Council Study Issue

CDD 11-03 Review Wireless Telecommunications Standards**Lead Department** Community Development**History** 1 year ago None 2 years ago None**1. What are the key elements of the issue? What precipitated it?**

The Federal Telecommunications Act of 1996 preempts almost all local authority to regulate wireless telecommunications infrastructure. Local control is essentially limited to issues of aesthetics. Demand for wireless telecommunications products and service has grown dramatically over the past decade, and carriers find it difficult to provide necessary coverage in urban areas, specifically in residential locations. This study would try to find a balance between the demand for new facilities and aesthetic impacts they create.

The City has received increasing numbers of wireless telecommunications applications in residential areas. As part of the review process, staff has explored ways of using existing structures, camouflaging new structures or reducing visual impacts by encouraging multiple carriers on one structure. Chapter 19.54, Wireless Telecommunications Facilities of the Sunnyvale Municipal Code has existing design guidelines to direct applicants, staff and the Planning Commission as to the preferred method of installation. 19.54.040(a) states: "Based on potential aesthetic impact, the order of preference for facility type is: facade mounted, roof mounted, ground mounted, and freestanding tower." It is difficult, in these residential areas, to find existing buildings upon which to mount antennas, so free-standing poles (existing and new) could be the only viable options. There have been recent requests to use public utility poles in the right-of-way for installations in residential areas, which are currently outside the authority of the zoning code.

This study would evaluate and consider ways to improve upon the current design criteria in the Wireless Telecommunication Facilities chapter of the Sunnyvale Municipal Code, especially relative to free-standing poles in residential areas. It could include the recommendation of the preparation of Wireless Telecommunication Guidelines. It would also consider locational requirements and ways to encourage co-location to further reduce the number of telecommunications structures in the City.

This study is related to CDD 09-08, which has a more broad scope to include this issue, consideration on the funding mechanisms to upgrade towers, and methods to enforcement telecommunications facilities in the city.

2. How does this relate to the General Plan or existing City Policy?

This study is related to the City's Telecommunication Policy and the City's Telecommunication Code of Title 19 in that regulating the aesthetics of facilities, within the allowances made by Federal law, is a purpose of the City's regulations.

LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT

Policy N.1.2, Require new development to be compatible with the neighborhood, adjacent land uses, and the transportation system.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS POLICY

Goal E, Facilitate the creation of an advanced telecommunications network infrastructure, within given resources, for Sunnyvale citizens, businesses, and industries.

COMMUNITY DESIGN SUB-ELEMENT

Policy 2.5C.1, Place a priority on quality architecture and site design which will enhance the image of Sunnyvale and create a vital and attractive environment for businesses, residents and visitors, and be reasonably balanced with the need for economic development to assure Sunnyvale's economic prosperity.

3. Origin of issue

Board or Commission Planning Commission

4. Staff effort required to conduct study Moderate**5. Multiple Year Project?** No **Planned Completion Year** 2011**6. Expected participation involved in the study issue process?**

Does Council need to approve a work plan? No

Does this issue require review by a Board/Commission? Yes

If so, which? Planning Commission

Is a Council Study Session anticipated? No

7. Briefly explain cost of study, including consultant hours, impacted budget program, required budget modifications, etc. and amounts if known.

Study would be covered with 234 Planning operating budget. Moderate cost is between 101-299 staff hours.

8. Briefly explain potential fiscal impact of implementing study results (consider capital and operating costs, as well as potential revenue).

Insignificant impact.

9. Staff Recommendation

Staff Recommendation Against Study

If 'For Study' or 'Against Study', explain

Staff have developed standard design criteria and conditions of approval that are customized as needed for each application. There are few additional design criterium that can be used in reviewing telecommunications facilities.

Reviewed by

Approved by


Department Director

Date

10/27/10


City Manager

Date

10-29-10